
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CPSC Announces Recall of Metal Toy Jewelry Sold in Vending Machines

Firms agree to stop importation until hazard is eliminated

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), four toy jewelry importers today announced the voluntary recall of 150 million pieces of toy jewelry sold in vending machines across America. CPSC has determined that some of this toy jewelry contains dangerous levels of lead, posing a risk of lead poisoning to children. Only about half of the 150 million pieces of toy jewelry actually contains lead, but, because it is difficult to distinguish the lead jewelry from the non-lead jewelry, the industry decided to recall all of it. The four firms are A & A Global Industries, Inc., of Cockeysville, Md.; Brand Imports, LLC, of Scottsdale, Ariz.; Cardinal Distributing Co. Inc., of Baltimore, Md.; and L. M. Becker & Co., Inc., of Kimberly, Wis.

CPSC has received one report of lead poisoning when a child swallowed a piece of toy jewelry containing lead that was previously recalled. No reports of injury or illness have been received for the recalled products announced today. Young children sometimes mouth or swallow items like these, and lead can leach from the jewelry into the child's body. Lead poisoning in children is associated with behavioral problems, learning disabilities, hearing problems and growth retardation.

The four firms have advised the Commission that they have stopped importing toy jewelry with lead and are committed to working with the CPSC staff on eliminating hazardous levels of lead in future importations of toy jewelry.

"With millions of pieces of jewelry involved in this recall, I urge parents to search their children's toys for this jewelry," said CPSC Chairman Hal Stratton. "Throw away this recalled toy jewelry." CPSC has issued guidance urging firms to eliminate lead in consumer products, or, if lead is used, to assure it is not accessible. CPSC collected and analyzed some samples of toy metal jewelry sold in vending machines and found that 10 of those products had lead that could be accessible to children. The industry volunteered, out of an abundance of caution, to recall additional products.

This toy jewelry recall involves various styles of rings, necklaces and bracelets. The rings are gold- or silver-colored with different designs and paint finishes with various shaped center stones. The necklaces have black cord or rope or gold- or silver-colored chains. The necklaces have pendants, crosses or various geometrical designs or shapes, and can include gemstones. The various styles of bracelets include charm bracelets, bracelets with medallion links, and bracelets with faux stones. All the jewelry was manufactured in India.

The toy jewelry was sold in vending machines located in malls, discount, department and grocery stores nationwide from January 2002 through June 2004 for between \$0.25 and \$0.75. The industry estimates that this toy jewelry is kept in homes for a short period of time, but parents should look for these items in their homes.

Consumers should throw away recalled jewelry. Consumers can contact the Toy Jewelry Recall Hotline for more information about this recall. Visit the Toy Jewelry Recall Hotline at (800) 441-4234 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, or visit the firms' Web site at www.toyjewelryrecall.com

Additional photos are available at www.toyjewelryrecall.com